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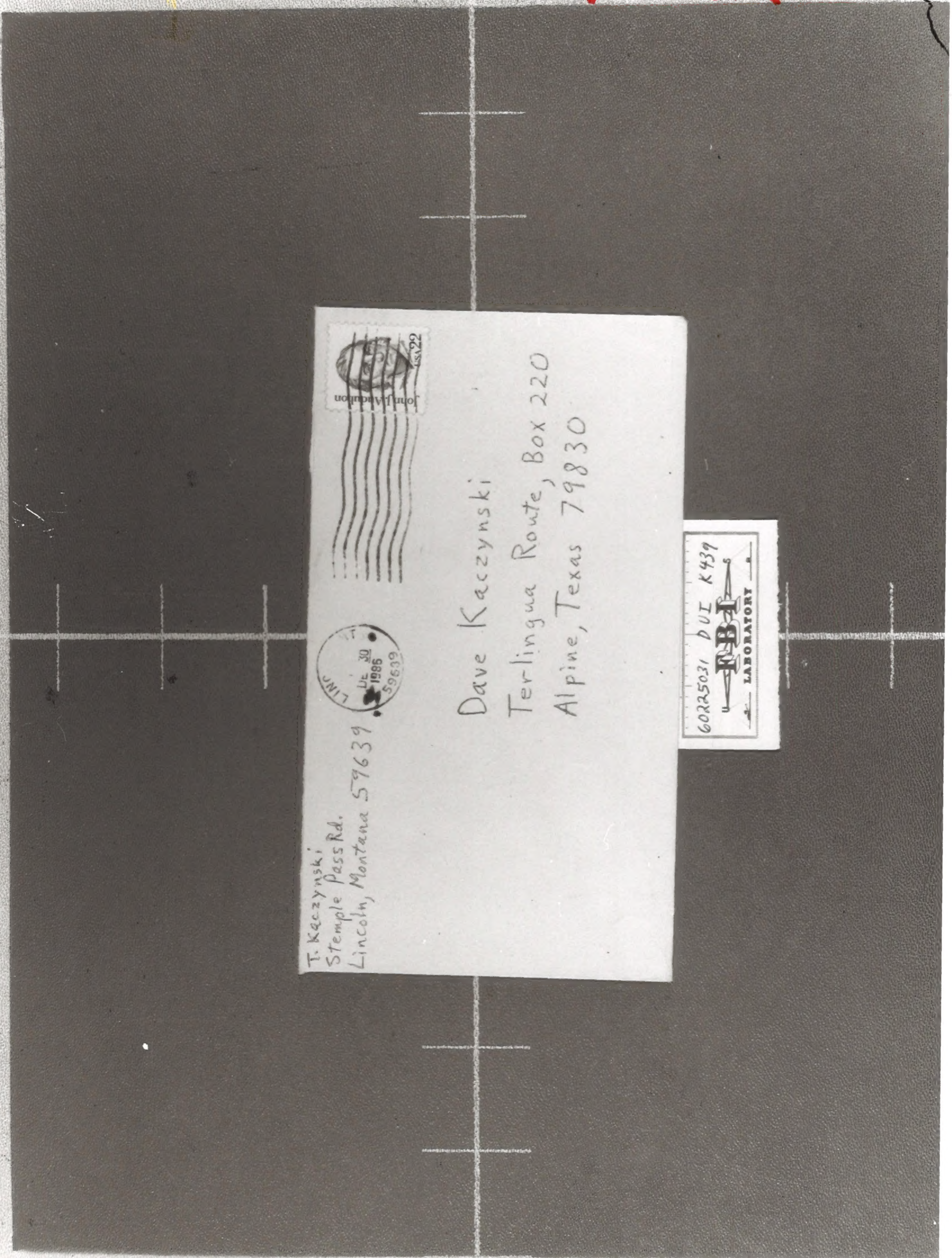
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LABORATORY

Dave — Don't forget to try the experiment of going out for a hike for a couple of weeks without taking any reading material along. I think you'll find the experience rewarding.

With regard to the book on ancient Mexican sculpture that you gave me, I find that on looking over the pictures more attentively, there are more pieces that I like. For instance, there is the "Great Coatlicue", which didn't interest me at first but which I now like much better. I look at it with a sense of humor, since it looks like the monster from a cheap horror movie, but still in its own way it is a kind of feast for the eyes. Much better is a statue of an adolescent boy, maybe 14 years old or so. From the point of view of strict realism it is pretty poor — for example the modeling of the limbs is very crude. But the artist has done a splendid job of capturing the general impression of the gawky physique of a teenage kid — and also it seems to me the psychological ebullience of that time of life — the kid looks like he has the energy of an adolescent. An interesting question — if the limbs had been well and realistically modeled, would it have detracted from the overall impression by distracting the viewer's attention to the anatomical details? Very possibly so.

— Ted

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NORTH POLE (AP) — Santa ("Saint Nick") Claus, alias Kris Kringle, was indicted today on charges of grand larceny and fraud for allegedly having diverted several million dollars' worth of toys to the mansion of a California millionaire on the evening of December 24 in exchange for $220,000 worth of shares in a nationally-known toy-manufacturing firm. The toys were to have been delivered to children across the country. The bearded, jack-booted Claus, who has been operating for years under a contract to transport several thousand sleigh-loads of toys annually, allegedly falsified records and altered shipping orders so that between 6 and 8 percent of the most expensive items arrived at the home of the millionaire, who was not named. Claus declined to comment on the charges.

"We feel that this may be only the tip of the iceberg", said investigator Anacharsis Klootz. "We know that Claus has repeatedly entered private homes at night through the chimney. This is illegal entry, but the police have been consistently winking at it. We are continuing our investigation to determine whether payoffs have been involved".

Meanwhile, a reliable source reported that the Easter Bunny has filed a complaint against Claus for allegedly attempting to muscle in on his egg-delivery business. Bunny, who had been threatened, was previously afraid to take action but was encouraged to do so on receiving news of Claus's arrest. In other developments, the Tooth Fairy reportedly has been accused of passing out counterfeit dimes, and is under

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investigation for sexually abusing sleeping children; a recent audit showed that more than $700,000 in boullion is missing from the pot of gold at the end of the rainbow; and laboratory tests have revealed that "Virgin" Mary is infected with AIDS. Several Halloween ghouls, including "Baron" Frankenstein and "Count" Dracula are said to have collected treats last October 31 by posing as costumed children.

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